

SMX East 2009: The Spinal Tap Wrap-up

Dave Culbertson

LightBulb Interactive

"Bright ideas for Internet Success"

Office: 614-421-5957

Website: www.lightbulbinteractive.com

Blog: www.lightbulbinteractive.blogspot.com

Twitter: www.twitter.com/daveculbertson

Web Analytics You Should Know

(For PPC)

Level 1

- Impressions
- Clicks
- CTR
- Cost
- CPC
- Avg position

Level 2

- Conversion Sales
- CPA
- Conversion Rates
- Revenue
- ROI

Level 3

- Customer geographic location (could lead to more focused geographically-targeted campaigns)
- Time of Conversion
- Demographics, LTV, Behavior, etc

Revisiting PageRank Sculpting / Linking

(PageRank almost entirely dependent upon links)

- Facts:
 - Google stopped using NoFollow for PageRank sculpting
 - Link juice for links using NoFollow is indeed thrown away
 - NoFollow is NOT a recommended tool for PageRank sculpting
 - NoFollow = a bandaid for poor site organization?
 - Guess - 3% of all links on web use NoFollow, 75% internal.
 - Google probably crawls a limited # of pages per site (proportional to inbound link popularity). Page sculpting can help ensure that Google indexes the pages that you want indexed.
 - PageRank Sculpting works best if your site has lots of pages (10,000 +)
- Tips:
 - Don't remove NoFollow abruptly – it's been seen to have negative effects.
 - NoFollow still considered good for print-friendly versions of pages
 - Don't simply give away links – consider outbound links as valuable currency
 - Don't give rank to internal and unimportant pages
 - Not having outbound links of any kind is ABNORMAL.
 - DON'T BUY INBOUND LINKS!
 - Inbound and outbound links both have value for your site
 - Links in main body text are much more valuable in passing pagerank than navigation links or links in footer copy. And you should vary the words pointing to a single page (Example: Tribune Obama main page has varied link titles - Obama, President Obama, Barack Obama, POTUS)

Duplicate Content Issues

(“ask the search engines”)

- Facts:
 - Google - no penalty for duplicate content, but it does split-up page value.
 - Google prefers HTML sitemaps to XML sitemaps, if only one can be used.
- Avoiding duplicate content with REL=CANONICAL
 - Canonical tag good idea for pages that are linked to using analytics tracking parameters
 - You can use either absolute or relative URLs, but absolute are preferred
 - Google currently only search engine supporting this
- Other ways to avoid duplicate content:
 - Don't use dynamic urls for static pages
 - Avoid dynamic URLs if possible. Rewriting dynamic URLs, however, has no ranking value with them. (Static URLs visually superior for searchers, might lead to higher CTRs)
 - Don't use DISALLOW in robots.txt for duplicate content
 - Use a trailing slash for directories, not for pages!

Domain Names, URLs, Parameters

- As URL length increases, rankings decrease (proves that important content needs to be near the root)
- Domain length doesn't seem to matter for rankings.
- Query parameters in URLs are less likely to rank highly (could be result of searchers favoring plain language URLs)
- Domain names with keywords rank higher (could be other factors)
- Keywords in sub-domains much less effective.
- Keywords in URL path far less valuable in rankings compared to domains
- Keywords in file name not much value (supermodel-wearing-wonder-bra.jpg)
- Keywords in query string, not much correlation either positively or negatively

Domain Names, URLs, Parameters, #2

- WWW domains appear much more frequently in the top rankings than sub domains or non-WWW domains
- HTTP versus HTTPS? Doesn't matter but use REL=CANONICAL tag to specify preferred if both work.
- Best URL: HTTP://www.keyword.com/keyword
- Next best: above as HTTPS
- Next best: HTTP://www.keyword.com/a/b/c/keyword
- Worst: HTTPS://www.domain.com/a/b/c/d?blah-blah-blah
- Always use a trailing slash for a directory (i.e., page that could have an index.php, etc.)
- No trailing slashes for content pages

SEARCH MEET DISPLAY, DISPLAY MEET SEARCH

- The combination of search ads + display ads outperforms each alone for driving offline sales. (%119 lift versus 82% versus 17%)
- ½ of internet users exposed to a display ad will eventually seek out that the brand / product / service using a search engine.
- Make sure that potential search results match with display ad content, domain name, etc.
- Consider piggy backing on category / competitive brand buzz
- Brands without the budget for offline advertising could effectively use display ads to build awareness.
- Auction-based display advertising is exploding.
- Consider re-targeting display ads if your site gets 40,000 unique visitors per month.
- Don't fall for the "performance deal" on retargeting! You might end up paying twice.
- Focus on high organic rankings, supplement with paid. High organic + high paid is magic.

Universal & Blended Search

- Universal search listing domination = universal brand control
- Make sure your content is clearly marked-up, particularly important for images and video. (file naming might not provide ranking value for pages but is helpful for getting pulled into universal search results)
- Pay more attention to micro formats and rich snippets (semantic tagging)

Universal & Blended Search, #2

[Rihanna - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

Robyn **Rihanna** Fenty (born February 20, 1988), known as **Rihanna**, is a Barbadian singer and model. Born in Saint Michael, Barbados, **Rihanna** moved to the ...

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Watch **Rihanna's** full-length web documentary and go behind the scenes to find out what it's like to be the face of Gucci's UNICEF 2009 holiday campaign. ...

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[Rihanna | Artists | Def Jam | Island Def Jam](#)

Congratulations to **Rihanna** on her 2009 BET Hip-Hop Award Nominations! Best Hip-Hop Collabo Jim Jones & Ron Browz ft. Juelz Santana "Pop Champagne" Lil Wayne ...

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Rihanna says she's not Justin Timberlake's lover - 1 day ago
RHIANNA has tracked down Jessica Biel's phone number to tell her that the rumours of anything between her and Justin Timberlake are strictly untrue. ...



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[Rihanna and Tacky Stewart team for new album](#) - [Vancouver Sun](#) - [9 related articles](#)

[Victoria's Secret: Lingerie and Women's Clothing, Accessories & more](#)

The world's most glamorous lingerie is only the beginning. **Victoria's Secret** is THE destination for chic women's clothing, sultry swimwear, must-have shoes ...

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Shop women's clothing, lingerie and more on sale at **Victoria's Secret**. From specially priced bras and panties to sales on designer clothing. ...

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[Victoria's Secret - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

Victoria's Secret is an American retailer of women's wear, lingerie and beauty products. It is the largest segment of publicly-traded Limited Brands with ...

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[Victoria's Secret is the leading specialty retailer of lingerie ...](#)

Victoria's Secret Lingerie, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, operates more than 1000 stores across the country.

[www.limitedbrands.com/brands/vs/index.jsp](#) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

Random Thoughts on Social Media

- Social media over-hype is a national epidemic.
- Over time, social media and search will become more intertwined.
- What works best on Twitter from several case studies:
 - Contests & Customer Service
- Unless you're tagging all Twitter links and analyzing log files, you're probably significantly undercounting referred visits.
- Facebook Tips:
 - Use profile attributes as a stand-in for search engine keywords
 - Facebook lexicon is a great keyword research tool
 - If you can tie FB ads into current events, much higher CTR

Big Ideas From SMX

- At the extremes, there are many ways to attempt to influence the rank of a web site on Google or any other search engine, but the best way to design a search-engine optimized site is by focusing first-and-foremost on your visitors with:
 - User-focused navigation / organization
 - Relevant Content that's not overloaded with keywords or technical jargon
 - Clean code
 - Fast load times
 - Providing tools to make the content easily shareable (links!).
- Then wrap this all up with analytics so you can track how visitors are using your site to determine if their needs are being met.
- Attribution is a big issue for everyone, big and small. Sometimes the roadblock is capabilities, sometimes it's mindset
- Google's focus: Helping searchers get the best response for their query. You should want your page to meet the searcher's expectation, not follow them into clicking over from Google.